

Workplace Violence Prevention in General Industry (Non-Health Care Settings) - Information for Employees

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), workplace violence is the second leading cause of fatal workplace injuries in the United States, affecting almost 2 million American workers every year.

Your employer is required to establish, implement, and maintain an effective written Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), as well as other safety & health programs to reduce your risk of exposure to hazards and prevent injuries and illnesses in the workplace. As of July 1, 2024, your employer will also be responsible for establishing, implementing, and maintaining an effective written Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP).

This employee fact sheet will define workplace violence, explain the four types of workplace violence, identify required WVPP training, recommend how to prevent workplace violence, and list your rights under requirements of the WVPP.

What is workplace violence?

“Workplace violence” means any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs in a place of employment.

What are the four types of workplace violence?

“Type 1 violence”: Workplace violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the worksite and includes violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace or approaches workers with the intent to commit a crime.

“Type 2 violence”: Workplace violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or visitors.

“Type 3 violence”: Workplace violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager.



“Type 4 violence”: Workplace violence committed in the workplace by a person who does not work there but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee.

Preventing workplace violence

Employers are required to provide training to employees on its WVPP when it is first established, during initial training, and every year after that. Additionally, training is required when a new or previously unrecognized workplace violence hazard is identified or there are changes made to an employer’s WVPP.

Workplace violence prevention training should include the following:

- How to involve employees and their representatives in developing and carrying out the WVPP.
- How to get a free copy of the written WVPP.
- How to report workplace violence incidents or concerns to your employer or law enforcement without fear of retaliation.
- What the workplace violence hazards are for the employees’ job.
 - How the employer will correct those hazards.
 - How the employee can get help to avoid or respond to violence.

(continued on next page)

- Suggestions on how to avoid physical harm.

How can employees help prevent workplace violence?

Inform your supervisor if you know of any incidents of workplace violence and/or if you suspect any incidents, which may include:

- Physical or verbal threats against an employee.
- Non-employees or strangers in the workplace who seem like they want to cause harm.
- Rumors of possible workplace violence.
- Arguments or physical fights between coworkers, clients and/or non-employees.

Become familiar with the procedures your employer has written on how to:

- Respond and report actual or potential workplace violence to your employer or law enforcement.
- Request a copy of the WVPP.
- Evacuate or take shelter in case of workplace violence emergencies.
- Avoid physical harm and workplace violence.
- Who to contact for questions and answers about the WVPP.

How does workplace violence prevention affect dual-employers and temporary (staffing) agencies?

If you are a temporary worker, both your staffing agency and the host employer whose workplace you work at are responsible for your safety and

health and must protect you against hazards in the workplace. Staffing agencies and the host employer must provide you with workplace protections as required by Cal/OSHA, such as appropriate training and personal protective equipment.

What rights do employees have under the workplace violence prevention plan?

Every employee has the right to:

- Be provided with training that they understand, in the language they understand.
- Obtain a free copy of the WVPP.
- Receive the following types of records related to workplace violence for copying and examination within 15 calendar days of the request:
 - Workplace violence hazard identification and evaluation
 - Training
 - Violent incident logs
- Report a violent incident, threat, or other workplace violence concern to the employer or law enforcement without fear of retaliation.

All workers have a right to a safe and healthful workplace, regardless of immigration status, and may file confidential complaints about workplace safety and health hazards with Cal/OSHA.

For work-related questions or complaints, contact the Cal/OSHA Call Center at 833-579-0927. Bilingual representatives are available to answer your questions.

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